

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 W
-----101346 311507Z /53
O 311447Z JAN 78
FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4940

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 CAIRO 03499

EXDIS (HANDLE AS NODIS)

FROM ATHERTON U.S. DEL NO. 32

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR EG IS
SUBJECT: MEETING WITH FOREIGN MINISTER KAMEL-JANUARY 31

1. EILTS AND I MET WITH FOREIGN MINISTER KAMEL THIS MORNING FOR TWO HOURS. WHILE I EXPECT TO MEET WITH HIM AGAIN TOMORROW, AND WITH SADAT AS WELL, I BELIEVE IT WOULD BE USEFUL, SUBJECT TO DEPARTMENT'S APPROVAL, FOR SAM LEWIS TO GIVE DAYAN THE FOLLOWING BRIEF REPORT ON TODAY'S MEETING. WE WILL BE SENDING THE DEPARTMENT A FULL ACCOUNT OF THE MEETING BY SEPTTEL.

2. WHILE POINTING OUT THAT EGYPT REMAINS DISAPPOINTED BY WHAT IT SEES AS ISRAEL'S FAILURE TO RESPOND IN ADEQUATE MEASURE TO SADAT'S INITIATIVES, KAMEL MADE CLEAR THAT THE GOE VERY MUCH WANTS TO CONTINUE THE NEGOTIATIONS AND TO REACH A SETTLEMENT BUT STRESSED IT MUST NOT REPEAT NOT BE PURELY BILATERAL EGYPT-ISRAEL. KAMEL INDICATED THAT THE NEGOTIATIONS WOULD HAVE TO INCLUDE JORDAN AND PALESTINIANS, BUT HE MADE NO REPEAT NO MENTION OF SYRIA. IN PARTICULAR, KAMEL MADE CLEAR THAT EGYPT WANTS TO CONTINUE WORK ON THE DRAFT DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES.

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3. I WENT OVER WITH KAMEL THE TEXT OF THE DRAFT DECLARATION STARTING FROM THE JANUARY 20 DRAFT WHICH THE SECRETARY GAVE TO SADAT AND WHICH I BROUGHT BACK FROM CAIRO WITH ME AND GAVE TO BEGIN ME AND DAYAN. I WENT DOWN THIS TEXT, AND CONVEYED TO KAMEL THE CHANGES PROPOSED BY THE ISRAELIS, GIVING HIM A FULL EXPLANATION

OF THE RATIONALE BEHIND THESE CHANGES AND POINTING OUT THE AREAS IN WHICH DAYAN HAD SOUGHT TO BE HELPFUL BY INTRODUCING LANGUAGE AND MAKING SUGGESTIONS AIMED AT SMOOTHING THE PATH FOR THE EGYPTIANS, IN PARTICULAR NEW PARAGRAPH 3. I ALSO POINTED OUT THAT THE ISRAELIS HAD AGREED TO MY SUGGESTION ON THE USE OF THE WORD "RIGHT" IN PARAGRAPH 4A, ON THE PALESTINIAN ISSUE, IN THE HOPE THAT THIS WOULD BE HELPFUL.

4. KAMEL SAID AT FIRST GLANCE IT WAS CLEAR THERE WERE STILL IMPORTANT DIFFERENCES TO BE OVERCOME, BUT HE MADE NO SPECIFIC COMMENTS ON THE DRAFT OR THE ISRAELI CHANGES. HE SAID HE WOULD STUDY IT AND, IN RESPONSE TO MY REQUEST, FINALLY INDICATED THAT IN PRINCIPLE HE WOULD BE AGREEABLE TO DISCUSSING IT WITH ME IN THE MEETING THAT WE WILL HAVE TOMORROW. ALTHOUGH I PRESSED HIM FOR EGYPTIANS' COMMENTS EVEN ON INFORMAL, NON-BINDING BASIS, I AM NOT SURE THAT KAMEL WILL BE PREPARED AT THAT TIME TO GIVE US DETAILED COMMENTS OR VIEWS ON THE DRAFT, SINCE EGYPTIANS CLEARLY PREFER TO WAIT UNTIL AFTER SADAT'S VISIT TO WASHINGTON BEFORE PURSUING FORMAL NEGOTIATIONS ON THE DRAFT DECLARATION. I ALSO URGED THAT EGYPTIANS BEGIN GIVING THOUGHT TO HOW NEGOTIATIONS CAN MOVE ON TO ITEMS B AND C OF POLITICAL COMMITTEE AGENDA. KAMEL SAID THEY WOULD DO SO, BUT IT REMAINS TO BE SEEN HOW MUCH IF ANYTHING WE GET FROM
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THEM ON THIS BEFORE SADAT'S VISIT.

5. AS FOR FURTHER NEGOTIATIONS ON THE DRAFT DECLARATION, KAMEL SAID EGYPT WANTS TO CONTINUE TO WORK THROUGH THE GOOD OFFICES OF THE UNITED STATES. HE HOPED I WOULD CONTINUE MY ROLE BETWEEN CAIRO AND JERUSALEM. HE SAW NEGOTIATIONS CONTINUING IN THIS MANNER ON THE DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES, WITH RESUMPTION OF THE FORMAL POLITICAL COMMITTEE MEETINGS COMING AFTER A DECLARATION HAS BEEN AGREED UPON. KAMEL MADE CLEAR THAT ONCE A DECLARATION IS ACHIEVED EGYPT WILL BE READY TO RESUME THE FORMAL POLITICAL COMMITTEE MEETINGS, THOUGH SITE AND TIMING WILL HAVE TO BE AGREED UPON. HE PLACED CONSIDERABLE STRESS ON IMPORTANCE OF JORDAN JOINING NEGOTIATIONS AT THAT STAGE.

6. ALL IN ALL, I BELIEVE MEETING WITH KAMEL WAS A USEFUL ONE. WHILE SERIOUS WORK ON THE DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES CAN PROBABLY NOT BE EXPECTED UNTIL AFTER THE MEETING BETWEEN PRESIDENTS CARTER AND SADAT, KAMEL GAVE DEFINITE IMPRESSION THAT THE EGYPTIANS ARE EAGER TO HAVE A DECLARATION AND WANT TO PURSUE EFFORTS ON IT (OF

COURSE THIS IS SOMETHING WE WILL HAVE TO CONFIRM WITH SADAT). I FOUND KAMEL HIMSELF MORE RELAXED, CONFIDENT AND FORTHCOMING THAN IN JERUSALEM. HIS AIDES HAD IN ADVANCE OF THE MEETING PREPARED A STATEMENT FOR HIM TO MAKE TO THE PRESS FOLLOWING OUR MEETING WHICH DECLARED THAT THE ISRAELI POSITION THAT I HAD REPORTED TO HIM WAS STILL "FAR FROM THE BASIC REQUIREMENTS OF PEACE." AT MY SUGGESTION, AND REALLY WITHOUT URGING ON MY PART, KAMEL AGREED TO STRIKE THIS LANGUAGE AND TO REPLACE IT

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ACTION NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 W
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FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4941

S E C R E T SECTION 02 OF 02 CAIRO 03499

EXDIS (HANDLE AS NODIS)

FROM ATHERTON U.S. DEL NO. 32

BY WORDS TO THE EFFECT THAT THERE IS "STILL CONSIDERABLE WORK TO BE DONE."

7. I WILL SEND FURTHER REPORT FOR DAYAN TOMORROW FOLLOWING MEETINGS WITH KAMEL AND SADAT. LEWIS SHOULD CAUTION DAYAN, AND DEPARTMENT OFFICERS READING THIS MESSAGE SHOULD ALSO KEEP IN MIND, THAT THE FOREIGN MINISTRY SO FAR SAYS SADAT WISHES TO KEEP MY MEETING WITH HIM OUT OF THE PRESS. I AM ANSWERING ALL PRESS INQUIRIES ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF A MEETING WITH SADAT BY REFERRING THEM TO OUR EGYPTIAN HOSTS. WHILE I SUSPECT THE MEETING WITH SADAT WILL IN THE END BE ANNOUNCED, IT IS IMPORTANT THAT NEITHER WE NOR THE ISRAELIS SAY ANYTHING THAT WOULD GIVE IT AWAY BEFORE EGYPTIANS DO SO.

8. ACTION REQUESTED THAT DEPARTMENT AUTHORIZE AMBASSADOR LEWIS TO BRIEF DAYAN ON BASIS OF THIS MESSAGE. EILTS

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLITICAL SETTLEMENT, MINISTERIAL MEETINGS, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, CAT-B
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 31 jan 1978
Decaption Date: 20 Mar 2014
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978CAIRO03499
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: n/a
Expiration:
Film Number: P850059-1944, N780002-0219
Format: TEL
From: CAIRO
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t1978015/aaaaadvr.tel
Line Count: 167
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: c5003ce2-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION NODS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: NODIS
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: NODIS
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 09 jun 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3754561
Secure: OPEN
Status: <DBA CHANGED> MCM 20040618
Subject: MEETING WITH FOREIGN MINISTER KAMEL-JANUARY 31
TAGS: PEPR, EG, IS, XF, (ELTS, HERMANN F)
To: STATE SS MULTIPLE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/c5003ce2-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014